

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

SAJ-01 CU-02 /061 W

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P 140515Z MAY 75

FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2340 PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L THESSALONIKI 300

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, XH

SUBJECT: FOUR COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS VISIT THESSALONIKI

REF: A) THESSALONIKI 288 , B) THESSALONIKI 167

1. THESSALONIKI PAPERS OF MAY 13 REPORT OFFICIAL VISITS
HERE THIS WEEK BY REPRESENTATIVES OF USSR, CZECHOSLOVAKIA,
EAST GERMANY, AND BULGARIA.

2. (A) SOVIET AMBASSADOR IGOR YEZOV IS SCHEDULED TO LAY
WREATH IN YUGOSLAV SECTION OF THESSALONIKI ALLIED WAR
CEMETERY MAY 15 TO HONOR SOVIET WORLD WAR 11 DEAD IN GREECE.
(YUGOSLAV CONGEN SPEAKING OF CEREMONY NOTED THAT DATE
COINCIDED WITH YUGOSLAV OBSERVANCE OF WORLD WAR 11 END,
ONE WEEK AFTER OTHER ALLIES.) INVITATIONS TO WREATH-LAYING
AND TO RECEPTION FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN SENT TO CONSULAR
CORPS AND PRESUMABLY TO LOCAL OFFICIALS, IN NAME OF SOVIET
AMBASSADOR. (B) TEN-MAN CZECH DELEGATION HEADED BY CZECH
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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT, L. CERNY, WHICH NOW IN

ATHENS, ALSO ARRIVING IN THESSALONIKI MAY 15. (C) BULGARIAN ORTHODOX ARCHBISHOP NICOLAI MAKAROPOLSKY WITH LARGE RETINUE CURRENTLY CONCLUDING TEN-DAY VISIT TO THESSALONIKI AND NORTHERN GREECE WHICH INCLUDED TOUR OF MOUNT ATHOS MONASTERIES. RECEPTION FOR ARCHBISHOP HOSTED BY BULGARIAN CONGEN SLAVTCHEV MAY 13 WAS WELL ATTENDED BY LOCAL OFFICIALS INCLUDING MINISTER FOR N. GREECE MARTIS, "C" CORPS COMMANDER KRITIKOS, NOMARCH, MAYOR, AND METROPOLITAN. (D) FINAL DELEGATION IS EAST GERMAN CULTURAL GROUP HEADED BY CULTURAL ATTACHE IN ATHENS, PETER HAASE, WHICH ARRIVED HERE MAY 12 TO OPEN WEEK-LONG EAST GERMAN FILM FESTIVAL AT LOCAL THEATER WHERE GREEK COMMUNIST PARTY RALLIES USUALLY HELD.

3. COMMENT: DELEGATIONS ABOVE FOLLOW VISITY TO THESSALONIKI IN PAST TWO WEEKS BY HIGH-LEVEL YUGOSLAV OFFICIALS (REF A) AND EAST GERMAN AMBASSADOR, ERNEST KUBE. (LATTER HELD WELL-PUBLICIZED PRESS CONFERENCE IN COURSE OF APRIL 28-29 STAY DURING WHICH HE VOICED EAST GERMAN SUPPORT FOR UNIFIED, INDEPENDENT CYPRUS, LAUDED EAST GERMAN MATERIAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO GREEK CYPRIOTS, CITED EXAMPLES OF INCREASED GREEK-EAST GERMAN ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS, AND IN CULTURAL FIELD, PROMISED THAT SUCH ATTRACTIONS AS EAST BERLIN SYMPHONY, DRESDEN OPERA AND LEIPZIG SYMPHONY WOULD BE PROGRAMMED FOR GREECE.) WREATH LAYING BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR FOLLOWS SIMILAR CEREMONY HERE MARCH 1 BY FOUR-MAN SOVIET DELEGATION MARKING RED ARMY ANNIVERSARY (REF B). REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER RECENT UNUSUAL FLURRY OF SUCH EVENTS COINCIDENTAL OR ORGANIZED EFFORT BY COMMUNIST STATES TO INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE IN THIS SENSITIVE GREEK REGION.

4. FOR DEPT AND EMBASSY ATHENS: WOULD APPRECIATE ANY GUIDANCE YOU MAY WISH PROVIDE CONCERNING ATTENDANCE AT MAY 15 SOVIET WREATH-LAYING AND RECEPTION. INVITATIONS REFER, RESPECTIVELY, TO "GRAVES OF SOVIET CITIZENS WHO FELL ON GREEK SOIL DURING STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCIST CONQUERORS", AND "THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF DEFEAT OF HITLER FASCISM".
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